



Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Michael Stuhr, P.E., Administrator
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May 1, 2019

Representative Barker, Chair
House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court Street NE, HR E
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 935 – Landscape contractor modified license

Dear Chair Barker and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland opposes the inclusion of irrigation systems in SB 935, which creates a path for a modified landscape contractors license. The measures included in the bill are outside the bounds of a recent rulemaking by the Landscape Contractors Board that created a new phase of license. Nationwide, landscape irrigation is estimated to account for nearly one-third of all residential water use, totaling nearly 9 billion gallons per day. Landscape contractors are important partners in the efficient use of water resources. Minimum education and licensure requirements ensure that those managing shared water resources have the knowledge and skill to be responsible stewards.

Rulemaking in late 2018 (OAR 808-003-0035) increased accessibility to licensure by creating a path for a modified license for landscape contractors and was the result of a collaborative process that included the Governor's office and stakeholders. The new rules, which went into effect February 1, 2019, included limited but important restrictions on scope of work, including irrigation systems. The City of Portland supports efforts for increased accessibility to this industry and would like to see the collaborative efforts of the rulemaking toward this goal have a chance to play out before making changes in statute.

The Portland Water Bureau provides clean, reliable water to almost 1 million Oregonians. Oregon water utilities have worked in partnership with the landscape construction industry to develop the current licensing requirements in ORS 671.571 and OAR 808-003-0035. Those requirements help ensure a well-educated and knowledgeable irrigation industry that can respond effectively to changing irrigation practices, policies and technology and can continue to promote improved practices that result in effective water efficiency.

The City of Portland respectfully urges your opposition to the inclusion of installation of irrigation systems in SB 935. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Michael Stuhr, P.E.
Administrator, Portland Water Bureau
City of Portland

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